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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE  
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

In re Patent Application of K. Aratani et al. ) Group Art Unit: 1753  
Application No. 09/429,719 )  
Filed: 29 Oct. 1999 ) Examiner: R. McDonald  
For: Thin film formation, use of sputtering ) Attorney Docket No. 9792486-0100

**APPELLANTS' REPLY BRIEF ON APPEAL**

Dear Sir:

Per MPEP 1208.03, the appellants reply as follows:

1. After the Conference, the Examiner telephoned the representative indicating that claims 21-24 would be withdrawn from the appeal as they are now found allowable. The Examiner asked if the representative would agree to divide out claims 21-24 and the appealed claims so that an application could issue on the allowed claims. Unfortunately, agreement was not reached. Accordingly, the appellants understand that claims 21-24 stand allowed and pending and claims 17, 18, and 20 are continuing on appeal. This statement is being made for the purposes of clarifying the claims on appeal.
2. The appellants also restate the arguments made in the appeal brief to rebut the arguments made by the Examiner in the Examiner's Answer.
3. As noted in the accompanying paper, per MPEP 1209, the representative requests an Oral Hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

By: Shashank Upadhye

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Dated: May 12, 2003